

ESL GREEN CONTACT ASSIGNMENT

Hayward High School Farmer's Garden & Ecology Center

Developed by **Catherine Hartman**, ESL Instructor at City College of San Francisco



This assignment takes students outside the classroom to help them gain an understanding of what is involved in growing food, while also offering an appreciation of broader environmentally responsible principles such as sustainability, recycling and the reuse of materials and resources.

Objectives

At the end of this assignment students will be able to:

- Gain an understanding of environmental vocabulary.
- Learn about environmentally responsible practices of farming.
- Conduct interviews with prepared questions.
- Participate in hands-on work in the field.
- Reflect on volunteer experience in writing and discussions.
- Present photos and movies of work experience in an oral presentation.
- Produce an online album.

Target Group

This assignment is appropriate for intermediate to advanced level ESL students (5-8). For the purpose of this lesson, the target group levels range from 1 through 8, with the following guidelines: 1= beginning, 5 = intermediate, and 8 = advanced.

Pre-Assignment Activities

- Begin with a two-day introduction to community and schoolyard gardens. Suggest that students visit the following website at <http://www.sfnpc.org/gardens> or print-out pages from the site. Prepare a list of questions for students to answer.
- Show students the short film of the San Francisco Fort Mason Community Garden at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATm9us6mDsY> . Ask them to note down vocabulary relating to this topic that is unfamiliar and then work in small groups to determine the meaning of the vocabulary from the context in which it is used. Review the vocabulary with the whole group.
- Distribute copies of articles taken from the Ecology Center website at <http://www.ecologycenter.org/about/whoweare.html>. Allow students time to read the Ecology Center’s Mission Statement on environmentally and socially responsible practices in the community. Ask them to answer questions pertaining to different aspects of the website:
 1. What is a farmers’ market?
 2. Why are they important to the community and environment?
 3. What is the Berkeley Community Gardening Collaborative?
 4. What does sustainability mean?
- Introduce students to the Hayward High School Farmer’s Garden & Ecology Center and direct students to the Hayward Garden Facebook page that showcases the project at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Hayward-CA/Hayward-High-School-Farmers-Garden-Ecology-Center/92428652488>
Also view their work on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0ddfv6vQAaw>



From the album:

[School Garden](#) by [Hayward High School Farmer’s Garden & Ecology Center](#)

- Ask students to work in pairs or small groups and prepare questions for interviews to be conducted with the teacher and students who run the Hayward Garden. The questions can be divided into a variety of categories, such as: the history of the garden, who runs it, how jobs are allocated, and what is the long term goal of the Hayward Garden. They may also want to ask teachers what they hope students will learn and take away from their participation in this project.
- Encourage students to take photos or videos during their time volunteering in the garden.
To make appointments to visit the Hayward Garden at Hayward High School contact Theo Hartman at: theo.hartman@gmail.com

The Assignment

- Arrange with teachers at the garden for students to conduct interviews with volunteers at a convenient time. Make sure students get permission from the individuals being interviewed before they proceed. They should take notes while conducting these interviews.
- Organize a tour of the garden (contact information given above) including the native habitat area surrounding the garden, the tool sheds, compost area and the place where the teacher and student volunteers gather for pre and post discussions of the day's plans.
- Students should document what they are doing with both photos and video.

NOTE: Students should expect to join in and work in the garden. This is a hands-on garden and everyone who comes is expected to volunteer.

Reflection Activity

- Encourage students to reflect on their volunteer experience in writing and then give an oral presentation along with their photos and video. This can be done as individuals or in pairs.
- Presentations can be followed up with group or class discussions reviewing what the students found most valuable about their experience, whether they would volunteer again and if they would recommend this experience to others.
- Suggest that the class collate their photos and videos to create an online album using <http://www.flickr.com/>, <http://wordpress.org/>, <http://photobucket.com/> or another photo sharing site.

Hayward High School teacher Theo Hartman was honored at the 4th Annual Bay Area Schools Environmental Conference as the Green Star Outstanding Teacher for 2010. Hartman, a social studies teacher, has worked to create a 2 acre, Bay Friendly registered, organic garden that has become the centerpiece of the school's emerging environmental programming which includes a PG&E Solar Schools grant, and a new Green California Partnership Academy designed to prepare students for the green jobs of the future.